



MRS. LUCY D. OSBORN

(At the request of friends the above picture of Mrs. Osborn is printed herewith)

"God My Exceeding Joy"

Psalm 43 : 4

By LUCY DRAKE OSBORN

In November 29th and February 7th Christian Witness, Rev. G. W. Ridout, in his Wayside Sketches referred to my deceased husband, Rev. W. B. Osborn, and to myself. It would seem as if that was amply sufficient, but recently I have had a conviction that I should write the Witness.

First: Because I owe a great debt to the "Holiness Movement," for it not only revolutionized my own life, and brought unspeakable blessings into it, but also into the lives of many others.

Secondly: Because, having labored publicly in many States in this country, in furthering the higher and deeper Christian life I would like to give my testimony, ere I depart to be with Christ, to the many who knew me in my younger days.

Thirdly, and chiefly: Because, knowing that the great majority of professed Christians have not realized Christ as a satisfying Portion, and practically their exceeding Joy.

I have an intense desire—yea, amounting to a passion, to reach and bring them into the possession of this, which is their duty and privilege.

When a young woman, I joined the church because I hoped I was a Christian, but having many doubts, I longed to **know** I had Christ, and then eternal life. Under the leadership of Charles Nichols, a lay evangelist of Boston, I was enabled to see in five minutes, how to exercise faith; and, moreover, I saw that I could do it any moment, unless I became a fool or insane.

After consciously meeting the conditions God had made, I exercised faith at once, regarding the pardon of my sins, and for the first time knew I had Christ and eternal life, and read my title deed in 1 John 5:9-13.

Since that time I have been trusting for a great variety of needs.

Some of the results have been the following: Not a doubt has crossed my mind for fifty-five years regarding my being a Christian. Having Christ, I had all the promises, including eternal life, entered evangelistic work in this country, won souls to Christ, went as a missionary to India, and founded and superintended the Union Missionary Training Institute of Brooklyn, N. Y., for nearly thirty years, from which two hundred and fifty trained workers have gone, two hundred of them to foreign countries. I might have obtained a knowledge I was a Christian, but none of these other results would have followed, if I had not sought just as definitely to be cleansed, entirely consecrated, and **to be filled with the Holy Ghost.** Especially, I emphasize the latter as the goal. It cannot be obtained, however, without the former preceding.

Now that husband and children are in heaven, earthly home gone, suffering much daily, and no longer in the loved work which engrossed me, my life would be unspeakably wretched without Christ. But since nearly all that would make life desirable is gone, God so manifests Himself that I am conscious of dwelling continually in Light ineffable, and He throws a glamour over all circumstances, even this horrible war. Instead of my life being miserable, it is unspeakable bliss, because God is my exceeding joy.

Oh! the luxury of not being dependent on people with their limitations, or changing circumstances for happiness. When we love a friend, it is not mainly because of what he or she gives us, or even for their words, much as we value them, for they are only the expression of what is the centre of their being, but is because of their distinct and attractive personality, i. e., of what he or she is in himself or herself. So, God himself has become matchlessly attractive, draws like a magnet. It is He Himself, that makes Heaven, and no wonder.

I have never realized as in the last few years, it is He Himself who is our "exceeding great Reward," and our "exceeding Joy." He having no limitations, it follows as naturally as we breathe, to rest in the assurance that whatever happens inside or out, He is equal to the situation. So we can well afford to be without carefulness, but buoyant and light hearted as children. When

He says, "All things are yours," if we credit Him, what more do we want? If anyone desires wisdom, He tells him to ask and "He giveth liberally and upbraideth not," and it shall be given him. If we want to be sure we fully meet out responsibilities, He says "He is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work." Just as free as the air we breathe He offers Himself to us for every need and perfect companionship. One author has said:

"Earth gets its price for what it gives us:
The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in."

" 'Tis heaven alone that is given away,
'Tis only God may be had for the asking."

But all this provision may be made, and yet not taken, and therefore the accompanying bliss is not realized. What is necessary? Faith. One definition of faith has greatly helped me, i. e., "Faith is taking God's view point of things." To aid I will give a concrete example.

A few months ago, I was very much burdened, and thought I was passing through some very hard trials, and it seemed as if there would be no end to them; but I decided I would pour out my heart to God. Before I had a chance to commence, He spoke to me, "For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen." I said, Thou dost know all things. I know so little, if Thou dost say they are **light**, I'll take thy view point and say so too, and if thou dost say they will work out a coming **weight** of glory, I'll say so too. If Thou dost say the afflictions are but for a **moment** compared to the **eternal** weight of coming glory, I'll say so too. OH! the happiness that flowed like a river, at once in my heart, while looking not at the things that are seen, but to the One unseen.

Let us each and always respond to His view point heartily, and thus gladden His heart, and the hearts of many of His children. Sinners also will be converted unto Him, and we will realize **Him**, as our **Exceeding Joy**.

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